

# NEVADA EARLY INTERVENTION INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL

March 8, 2007

## MINUTES

### ATTENDANCE

#### Interagency Coordinating Council Members Present:

Jerry Allen	Nevada Division of Welfare, Child Care Financing
Keith Allred, Co-Chair	Nevada Department of Education
Myra Berkovits	Clark County School District Title I HOPE
Ann Bingham	University of Nevada, Reno, Dept. of Educational Specialties
Yvonne Brueggert	Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center
Alice Chernich	Sunrise Hospital
Dianne Farkas	Family to Family Connection, Las Vegas West
Paula Crawford	Southern Nevada Early Intervention Services
Molly Hayes	Nellis Child Development Center
JoAnn Johnson	Nevada University Center for Excellence in Disabilities
Robin Kincaid	Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents
Carren Knehr	Parent Representative – Southern Region
Joyce Larsen	Division of Child and Family Services, Early Childhood Mental Health
Pamela McKay	Division of Insurance
Johnette Oman	Northern Nevada Early Intervention Services
David Rovetti, Co-Chair	Parent Representative – Northern Region
Bodi Wallace	Parent Representative – Southern Region
Richard Weathermon	Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

#### Interagency Coordinating Council Members Absent:

Chuck Duarte	Division of Health Care Finance and Policy
Sheila Leslie	Assemblywoman, Nevada Legislature
Nancy Sileo	University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Special Education
Caroline Thomas	Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, CAPTA
Rosa Waitman	Parent Representative – Southern Region
Sherry Waugh	Early Head Start
Richard Whitley	Nevada Health Division

#### Nevada State Health Division Staff Present:

Janelle Mulvenon, Bureau Chief	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Wendy Whipple, Part C Coordinator	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Gary Oehlert, Administrative Services Officer	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Brenda Bledsoe, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Cathy Robinson, Administrative Assistant	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Edie King, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Iandia Poole, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Daniel Dinnell, Part C Staff	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Melanie Whitney, Part C Data Manager	Bureau of Early Intervention Services
Allan Mandell, Program Manager	Northwestern Nevada Early Intervention Services
Mary Ellen Stephen, Program Manager	Southern Nevada Early Intervention Services
Jennifer Ramiscal, Family Specialist IV	Southern Nevada Early Intervention Services

#### Public/Guests Present:

Deela L. Coutu	REM Nevada
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Charlene DiBello  
Shannon Springer  
Betty Sherwood  
Nora Behrens  
Kelly Morgan

REM Nevada  
Autism Coalition  
Family Advisor Committee  
Parent  
Parent

## **CALL TO ORDER**

David Rovetti, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m. The Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) meeting was video-conferenced from Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS), 2667 Enterprise Road, Reno and NEIS, 1611 Valley View, Las Vegas. A quorum of members was present; the meeting proceeded as scheduled.

## **Introductions and Announcements**

Introductions were made in both Reno and Las Vegas.

David Rovetti announced he had attended the Partners in Policy Making class last week and spoke about the ICC. He remarked there are five people interested in becoming a parent representative for Northern Nevada. He suggested that those interested come to an ICC meeting.

## **Johnette Oman Bio**

Johnette Oman introduced herself and spoke regarding her background in education and early intervention.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Approve December 7, 2006 minutes with the following corrections:

- Page 5, paragraph 4, third sentence should read “Nevada is striving for this but the target as shown in the SPP is .58% and was determined by baseline data.
- Page 5, paragraph 6, fourth sentence was clarified to read “The state improved from SFY 2004 of 318 children (who had new IFSPs) at 25% to 783 children at 67.1% which is an improvement of 465 children or 146%.”

**BY:** Pam MacKay

**SECOND:** JoAnn Johnson

**VOTE:** Motion Passed

## **FFY06 APPLICATION**

W. Whipple presented the IDEA annual application for funds stating that this application must be submitted for the State to receive the Federal Part C allocation of approximately three million dollars. The format in which it is submitted is provided by OSEP and is a checklist of assurances of all required items per federal regulations. W. Whipple reported 30% of the grant is retained in the Part C lead agency to fund required functions such as program monitoring, training, technical assistance, program oversight, development of the state system of policies and procedures, community collaboration, and child find. It also funds a portion of the Bureau staff, all of Part C staff, and the operating budget which includes the ICC budget. The bulk of the 30% is applied to salaries and operating costs. The remaining 70% of the grant goes to the direct service programs to provide services to children. W. Whipple remarked the required public comment meeting will be held following the ICC meeting today and anyone wanting to make comments may attend.

B. Wallace inquired as to the amount allotted for the ICC budget. W. Whipple replied the ICC budget is \$17,000.

## **Special Conditions**

A copy of the February 1, 2007 Special Conditions report to OSEP was included in the meeting packet.

### Policy Document

W. Whipple stated the revised policy document was sent to OSEP for approval in 2004 and IDEA was also being reauthorized during that time. OSEP stated because IDEA was reauthorized they would not review the policy document which meant the 2001 policies were still in effect. Since 2004, OSEP has stated new regulations would be released. W. Whipple noted it was decided it was important to move forward with the policy document even though it would have to be revisited when OSEP released the new regulations. This is why language was embedded in the policy document from the 2004 IDEA reauthorization along with best guesses as to how the new requirements would be interpreted.

Y. Brueggert stated her concern about the removal of nursing and nutrition services. W. Whipple explained their removal from IDEA 2004 and stated the personnel are still in the regulations but the service was dropped. It was decided to remove nursing and nutrition services from the policy document but it does not mean these services will not be provided. There is no intention of eliminating nutritional services and staff. The services are allowable but not required.

R. Kincaid commented on the January 23 letter of clarification from OSEP regarding the consent parents will now have to provide for Medicaid to be billed. W. Whipple replied the letter was directed to Part B not Part C but NECTAC was asked if they could follow up to find out if the letter would apply to Part C or to Part B only. A discussion regarding the ramifications of this letter for Part C was held and a request to have this topic on the next agenda was made.

W. Whipple noted one change proposed in the policy document was to the definition of the timely service provision. She explained during a technical assistance call OSEP clarified the issue of timely, and how the state's requirement may conflict with what an IFSP team may have determined to be appropriate for that child. OSEP replied that a combination definition is acceptable. W. Whipple described examples of when this would be used. Y. Brueggert suggested clarifying the language of this section (303.12) within the policy document.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

#### Governor's Recommended Budget

Janelle Mulvenon introduced Gary Oehlert, Administrative Services Officer for the Bureau, noting he was in attendance to help answer questions and offer additional explanations to any ICC member questions regarding the budget. She gave an overview of the two handouts on the FY 2008/2009 budget explaining new allocations will go to community providers. The annual cost for serving a child is approximately \$8,728. J. Mulvenon stated G. Oehlert is working on cost projections and information can be provided to ICC member on completion. Discussion on budget calculations and assumptions took place.

B. Wallace asked for clarification regarding how federal funding and other funding is incorporated into the budget. J. Mulvenon responded all revenue sources are reflected in the budget. Y. Brueggert asked how ICC members could support Early Intervention Services receiving additional funds not currently reflected in the recommended budget. J. Mulvenon stated that as citizens they may attend the hearings, send e-mails and correspondence to representatives, and provide public comment. She noted the budget hearing for Budget Account 3208 is on March 15.

J. Mulvenon stated the ICC will be sent additional birth and census data numbers as it relates to budget determinations.

#### Privatization of Early Intervention Services

J. Mulvenon provided a brief update on an anticipated privatization bill draft and noted the BDR is being worked on by the Legislative Counsel Bureau. In short, the BDR is in response to the SPAC Legislative subcommittee who recommended that 20% of early intervention services be provided by community providers. No specific

details have been made public. The Bureau office will forward a copy of the bill to all ICC members once it is introduced.

#### ICC Resolution

This agenda item was not discussed.

### **PROPOSED FINANCE COMMITTEE**

B. Wallace stated the idea for a finance committee came from discussions between ICC parent members who were interested in the budget for BEIS. He proposed the mission of the committee would be to educate all ICC members about the BEIS budget and the ICC budget and the goal would be to provide and communicate an executive summary of the BEIS budget to the ICC on a regular basis. He also proposed that the duties would be to meet with the program managers and the bureau chief for the purpose of gathering information and facilitating communication so that the ICC is kept informed. B. Wallace believes the ICC could more effectively advocate for more funding at the legislature. D. Rovetti added other states do have ICC finance committees and he would like this topic added to the next agenda to see if there is enough member interest.

J. Mulvenon stated it would be a good idea to have such a committee or workgroup to learn the process and obstacles in submitting a budget.

### **PERFORMANCE DATA**

#### Regional Program Report Cards

W. Whipple reported she emailed the report card to all ICC members for review, comments and changes. This is a requirement for the Annual Performance Report (APR) and our State Performance Plan (SPP) from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). They have specified what has to be reported in this report card. The report cards were created in a simple one page format and will be posted on the BEIS website. Each region will be reported and next year REM and Easter Seals will be included in the reporting.

#### CLEO Report

M. Whitney gave an overview of the data contained on each of the charts and graphs provided. She stated the reports are done quarterly and sent to the state budget office as well as Legislative Council Bureau (LCB). B. Wallace asked if there is any benefit to privatization. J. Mulvenon noted the Bureau is looking into how to increase service capacity.

#### Regional/State Program Quarterly Performance Data

M. Whitney reviewed performance data and described how the numbers are calculated. She reviewed total number of children served, total new IFSP's, and the number of children that have met the 45-day timeline.

### **REGIONAL PROGRAM UPDATE**

#### NEIS-South

Mary Ellen Stephen introduced herself and provided highlights of the programs currently being done at NEIS-South. She stated the programs emphasize outreach, child find, and public relations. A family specialist spearheads this by making contact with community agencies, pediatricians, and hospitals in an effort to get information regarding NEIS out into the community which will hopefully bring in new referrals. NEIS-South has been working towards the compliance of the 45 day timeline by increasing the core entry teams. The core entry teams were started in September and have three meeting times on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and one on Wednesday. The goal is to have 73 entry team meetings per week. M. Stephen also reported an increase in parent and family involvement due to support groups they have been holding. Topic Talk is one such program which restarted in September. Families come weekly to meetings to share with one another, learn something new, and enjoy the camaraderie of other parents. Respite is provided for children who attend these meetings with their parents. During this time the children participate in the Explore and Learn curriculum. M. Stephen noted in November, two children of family specialists established a monthly sibling support group named Sibs. There are

now 14 children from ages 7 to 16 who attend. These youth are free to share their feelings about having a sibling with a special need while doing arts and crafts and enjoying snacks. M. Stephen remarked Hidden Miracles is now having their monthly meetings at the NEIS-South site and two family specialists attend to help them. She continued by reporting that in January a parent training called Love and Logic, which alternates with Topic Talk, was started. Approximately 30 parents participated in this series of trainings.

M. Stephen announced The Explore and Learn group at Nellis Air Force base received a Best Practice Award which is a national inspection award completed by the Air Force.

M. Stephen stated NEIS-South has several new projects underway. A collaboration with Touro University Occupational Therapy Department provides for occupational therapy (OT) students to do their field placement at NEIS-South. A dual sensory project at UNLV was started with a family specialist being the liaison. This project has been very helpful in increasing referrals for those children who have a visual and hearing deficit. Another project to be started in April is with Sunrise NICU where developmental and family specialists are designated to go to the hospital each week to meet with their staff and new families who have a child with an automatic eligibility into Part C services and to attend parent support meetings. The goal of this project is to have a specialist available for the family as they transition from the hospital to NEIS in the first few months. In the future, it is planned to have more hospitals participating in similar projects.

M. Stephen reported referrals from July 1, 2006 to February 2007 were 1,250 which is a big increase over last year. She proudly stated memorandums of understandings (MOU) have been signed between NEIS and Esmeralda County which was the last county to sign an MOU with them. She explained an MOU is an agreement with the school district for the transition of children. It contains what NEIS will be responsible for and what the school district is responsible for so that the transition for children leaving NEIS and going to the school district is a smoother process. The Explore and Learn groups have been very successful and are now in 30 different sites. These groups are where families in communities are coming together whether the child has a special need or not to participate in a specific curriculum that focuses on children's IFSP outcomes and typical development. Two new projects are an Emotional Social Developmental Team that is looking at the assessment tools for the treatment of children with significant social and emotional delays. The team meets monthly to discuss different assessments and treatment strategies in this overlooked area which all early intervention services throughout the country are now looking at. Lastly, the Hanen Language program was started by two NEIS speech pathologists, who are certified in this program. It is called "It takes two to talk" and is a nine week course for parents. In this course, the parents are taught how to increase language stimulation for their children. Jennifer Ramiscal showed a DVD called "Little Hands Big Hands" highlighting events the program participated in over the year.

#### REM-Introduction

On behalf of Charlene DiBello, Deela Coutu gave an overview of how REM came to Nevada and the program mission. In 1999, REM started with residential services which were mostly contracted with Desert Regional Center for young adults and adults with developmental disabilities. In 2003 Mentor Network merged with REM Nevada and are now part of a much larger company providing services in 37 states. Services were increased by their access to early intervention support through offices in California and Arizona providing early intervention services through Mentor Network. In February 2007, they received their first referrals from NEIS; seven in February and three in March.

D. Coutu was asked to give a brief overview of her background. She stated she is the Director of Early Intervention Programs for REM and described her background as it related to early intervention services. She reported she was in the Air Force for 15 years and worked as an Occupational Therapist Assistant within a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). She worked on very basic developmental skills as well as splinting and adaptive equipment. After the Air Force, she received her Bachelor's in social work and worked with children and hospice. For the last eight years she worked in California with children in the mental health systems. She noted she has her masters in family therapy and ran group therapy programs for youth ages 3 through 18.

D. Coutu explained how they are receiving and processing referrals from NEIS-South. She noted REM Nevada is contracted for 50 children until June 2007 and then in FY 08 they are contracted for 100 children. NEIS does the intake and then REM does the screening for eligibility. The contract is paid through a subgrant and they are paid per evaluation and IFSP at a bundled rate. REM stands for the initials of the founder Robert E. Miller who was one of the primary players in getting young children with disabilities out of institutions and mainstreaming them into the community. This is a for-profit organization and Part C is funding the EI services. They do not bill Medicaid because they are 100% federally funded and federally funded programs can not bill Medicaid because it is considered "double dipping." They currently operate other service programs (not early intervention) in Carson City and Reno. There is interest in moving into Northern Nevada in the future but they want to get the Southern program running well before expanding the early intervention services. The rates being received are \$300 for evaluations and if there is an IFSP and ongoing services the rate is \$727 per month for as long as they remain in service.

#### Easter Seals

Representative was not present so this item was tabled until the next meeting.

#### **FAMILY SURVEY 2006**

W. Whipple discussed the Annual Family Survey. She noted the University of Nevada Reno (UNR) Center for Excellence received a subgrant to disseminate the surveys and compiled the information. This is the annual process of getting feedback and input from parents. A task force created the survey after reviewing previous NEIS and national surveys ensuring the compilation of questions met the federal questions for the State Performance Plan and inquiries NEIS had. The next survey will go out in April. J. Johnson discussed the process the task force went through to create the survey. R. Kincaid noted that she would like to have the names of the providers taken out. Discussion of confidentiality in regards to using providers' names took place. K. Allred asked if the option to complete the survey online will be available and if it was available in Spanish. J. Johnson stated Spanish surveys were available and they had tried to have the survey on line but had some problems in doing so. W. Whipple explained approximately 600 surveys went out to fulfill OSEP's requirement of sending them out to families who had children in services for six months which is about half of the enrolled population. There was a return rate of approximately 20%. B. Wallace asked if a summary of the survey could be made available to potential families so they are able to see comments regarding service provision. W. Whipple noted each regional program does an exit survey with families so the families can give feedback as to their experiences. J. Johnson suggested a postcard mailing to all families giving them a recap of the last survey and a timeframe of when the next survey will be mailed.

#### **DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PARENT MENTOR PROJECT**

B. Wallace reported this is in a state of construction. He believes it is needed and informally it is taking place at least in Southern Nevada. The general idea is that experienced parents reach out to new parents to show them they are not alone, share their experiences, and offer help. An official ICC presentation is being worked on and what has been done is the new project with Sunrise Hospital. It was requested that this item be continued on the May agenda.

#### **STANDING ICC COMMITTEES**

##### Parent Legislative Education Committee (PLEC)

Y. Brueggert stated they met on February 15. She reported members discussed the differences in the agency's requested amounts in the budget versus the Governor's recommended amount. It was decided to keep track of upcoming legislation and monitor the budget meetings to keep parents informed. They are also tracking BDR 40-12, the privatization bill from Senator Hardy. A discussion was held on the merits of having a session on legislation at the Fall Family First Conference even though it will be beyond the actual Legislative session. Members are developing additional articles for various program newsletters. Discussion around the possibility of merging with the Family Support Resource Committee (FSRC) was held.

### Child Find Committee (CFC)

B. Wallace stated the next videoconferenced meeting will be on March 16th.

### Family Support Resource Committee (FRSC)

- Biennium Parent Conference Proposal

Dan Dinnell stated no date has been confirmed for the conference yet. He explained setting the date hinges on when UNLV sets their homecoming week. He also noted R. Waitman informed him Best Coalition hired an executive director and soon the contract will be signed for them to be the fiscal agent. The next meeting is April 10th at 10 a.m.

R. Weathermon reported he presented the letter requesting support for the conference to the Developmental Disabilities Council and received their approval.

## **CHAIRMAN/MEMBER ITEMS**

### Schedule Future Meetings

- May 17, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. in Reno via Videoconference – Locations: NEIS 1161 S. Valley View, Las Vegas, and NEIS, 2667 Enterprise Road, Reno
- September 6, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. in Las Vegas via Videoconference – Locations: NEIS 1161 S. Valley View, Las Vegas, and NEIS, 2667 Enterprise Road, Reno
- November 1, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. in Reno via Videoconference – Locations: NEIS 1161 S. Valley View, Las Vegas, and NEIS, 2667 Enterprise Road, Reno. *This date is tentative as it was intended to be the day before the Family First Conference for a strategic planning session.*

### Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The following items were suggested for the next meeting:

- Supporting rural families and professional staff – R. Waitman
- Creation of a finance committee – B. Wallace
- Plan the ICC strategic planning meeting – K. Allred
- ICC Parent Representatives Meeting Update
- Fees or No Fees discussion – ICC position – D. Rovetti

### ICC Parent Representative Meeting Update

D. Rovetti stated that parents are wondering if it would be possible to have a face to face meeting in the near future. They wondered if perhaps they could meet on March 15th to discuss ICC issues.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kelly Morgan, parent of child receiving services in the South, provided comments regarding occupational therapy services rendered in her home. She noted she was grateful for NEIS being available but is unhappy with the therapist who was providing her son's occupational therapy. P. Crawford stated she would provide Ms. Morgan with her business card and the therapist's supervisor's name. B. Wallace offered advice and recommendations to parent advocate groups.

D. Rovetti suggested a discussion topic of how NEIS is meeting the needs of individual families be put on the next agenda.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair D. Rovetti adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.